EXTENSION IN ACTION

Serving Logan, Menard, and Sangamon Counties

ILLINOIS EXTENSION 2023





Terri Casey County Director



Communities flourish when they have an Extension connection

When people think of Extension, they often envision the 4-H clover, Master Gardeners assisting with gardening dilemmas or excited kids learning about foods in schools. However, there is something harder to picture in your mind, which is the true cornerstone of Extension, and that's the connections we have with the community.

In this report, we're spotlighting how Extension connects with the communities we serve and partners with area organizations to enhance the impact of our outreach to strengthen and improve the lives of the people we serve. Highlights include:

- **Community Outreach**. Extension partnered with or provided services for over 80 organizations in 2023. Through our outreach efforts in Logan, Menard, and Sangamon counties, almost 1,000 educational sessions were held, with over 25,000 people attending programs in 2023.
- **Community Service**. We have over 200 Extension volunteers serving our communities. Master Gardeners support eight Extension educational gardens with 300 pounds of produce donated, as well as

offering 213 expert garden consultations. Plus, our 64 dedicated 4-H volunteers helped to lead 38 active 4-H clubs.

- Youth in Action. Our 500+ 4-H members offer their "hands to larger service" through community service, including planting trees to restore an oak savannah.
- **Growing Healthy Communities**. The "Growing Great Vegetables" webinar is responsible for helping 300 people learn the basics of growing their own food and partnering with organizations to offer gardening lessons, recipe demonstrations, and healthy eating workshops.

Extension is your connection to a larger community. We leverage our expert knowledge with our partners to help folks get the assistance they need. All this is possible due to our dedicated staff, volunteers, partners, donors, and federal, state, and local funding. Thank you for taking a moment to review our annual impact report, and we look forward to connecting with you in 2024.

Terri Casey County Director

Cover Photo: A sunflower grows in the Small Fruits & Vegetables Garden outside the Sangamon Extension Office.

Illinois Extension Makes an Impact

The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's land-grant mission thrives each day through Extension's programs, resources, knowledge, and dedicated staff that are responsive to five grand challenge themes:



Community: Support Strong and Resilient Residents



Economy: Grow a Prosperous Economy

Environment: Sustain Natural Resources at Home and in Public Spaces



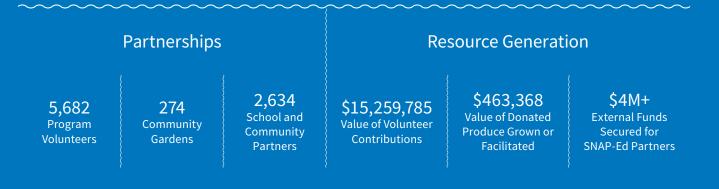
Food: Maintain a Safe and Accessible Food Supply

Health: Maximize Physical, Mental, and Emotional Health



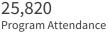
Extension leaders, staff, and stakeholders define priorities that create meaningful, mission-centered outcomes throughout the state:

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657 Communities Served	<b>745K+</b> Program Attendees	12.7M+ Webpage Views	58.5M+ Social Media Impressions	1.8M+ YouTube Views
<b>555</b> Educational Sessions/Week (28K+ Annually)	<b>90</b> Online Courses Accessed by 12K+ People	<b>10,158</b> Local Government Education Webinar Reach	<b>1,799</b> 4-H Clubs	<b>199,400</b> 4-H Experiences



# Community Connections in 2023





**Educational Sessions** 



203 Volunteers



505 4-H Club Members



213

Expert Consultations with Master Gardeners 29

SNAP-Ed Partnerships with Schools, Emergency Food Sites, and Other Organizations

#### Local Illinois Extension staff partnered with or provided services for the following organizations and schools in 2023:

- Adams Wildlife Sanctuary, Illinois Audubon Society
- Adams School
- Addams Elementary
- Athens Athletic Complex

980

- Athens Christian Church After School
   Program
- Athens FFA Chapter
- Athens High School
- Athens Junior High School
- Butler Elementary
- Central Illinois Foodbank
- Challenger Learning Center
- Chatham Elementary School
- Compass for Kids
- Dubois Elementary
- Emden Grade School
- Enos Elementary
- Enos Park Neighborhood Gardens
- Fairview Elementary
- Family, Career and Community Leaders of America
- Farmingdale Elementary
- Feitshans Elementary
- Friends of the Sangamon Valley
- Glenwood Elementary School
- Glenwood Middle School
- Green Prairie Animal Hospital
- Harvard Park Elementary
- Hazel Dell Elementary
- Head Start, Community Action Partnership of Central Illinois

- Henson Robinson Zoo
- Holy Family Food Pantry
- Hope Grows Neighborhood Center
- Illinois Department of Agriculture
- Illinois Products Farmers' Market
- Illinois State Fairgrounds
- Kickapoo Creek Park, Logan County
   Parks & Trails Foundation
- Kiwanis Club of Lincoln
- Left Handers Gun Club
- Lincoln Home National Historic Site, National Park Service
- Lincoln Memorial Garden
- Lincoln Memorial Hospital
   Community Health Collaborative
- Lincoln Memorial Hospital Market
- Lincoln Public Library District
- Lincoln YMCA
- Lindsay Elementary
- Logan County Fairgrounds
- Marsh Elementary
- Matheny-Withrow Elementary
- McBrian Lincoln-Douglas Toastmasters Club
- McClernand Elementary
- Menard County Fairgrounds
- Menard County Farm Bureau
- Menard County Soil and Water Conservation District
- Motherland Gardens Community
   Project
- Northwest Elementary School

- Oasis Senior Center
- Petersburg Public Library
- Petersburg Veterinary Clinic
- PORTA Community School District
- Prairie Skies Public Library District
- Prairie State Beekeepers
- Project SCOPE
- Ridgely Elementary
- Rigney's School of Archery
- Riverton Middle School
- Riverton High School
- Rochester High School
- Salvation Army 360 Life Center of Lincoln
- Sandburg Elementary
- Sangamon County Fairgrounds
- Sangamon County Farm Bureau
- Sangamon County Home and Community Education
- Scully Park, City of Lincoln
- Sherman Public Library District
- SIU School of Medicine
- Southeast High School
- Southern View Elementary
- Springfield Christian School
- Springfield Lincoln Land Chapter, American Sewing Guild
- Springfield Urban League
- Starhill Forest Arboretum
- Table of Life Ministries
- West Sangamon Public Library
- Wilcox Elementary

# Extension programs support strong and resilient youth, families, and communities

A strong sense of community brings people together to develop shared goals, support one another in times of need and growth, and work together for the good of the whole. Accepting and celebrating differences creates an environment where all voices are recognized and respected. When strong networks of peers and organizations support youth and families, even the most vulnerable community members feel they belong and are valued.

## Inspiring fun and active lifestyles in Logan County

New Storybook Walking Paths reminded children and families in a fun and engaging way how vital daily physical activity is for their health. Using the book "Giraffes Can't Dance," Extension staff created large signs of the book pages, and families could walk a path to read the book. At the end of the story, participants could do other activities and learn more about SNAP-Ed resources. Storybook walks were held in partnership with the Lincoln Memorial Hospital Community Health Collaborative and will continue to be hosted in more locations with new books.



Healthy living information is shared at the first Storybook Walking Path set up at the Lincoln Memorial Hospital Market.

Extension is uniquely able to build partnerships and make connections that enable our local communities to flourish. County Director Terri Casey

## Growing a vibrant future in Menard County

Thanks to efforts from local youth and community members, the Athens Athletic Complex is now home to an oak tree savannah. The 4-H Green Communities Trees Program focuses on tackling global issues at a local level. Over 70 youth from 4-H, FFA, and Athens High School were teamed with adult volunteers from the Menard Soil and Water Conservation District, Starhill Forest Arboretum, and Illinois Extension for hands-on learning by planting 25 trees that will bring new life to oak-hickory forests currently under threat in Illinois.



High school students spread mulch around a newly planted tree.

## Enabling economical food choices in Sangamon County

Extension staff from the SNAP-Ed and horticulture programs teamed up to provide a nutrition and container gardening program at Table of Life Ministries. "The More You Know, The More You Grow" combined small-space gardening principles with SNAP-Ed Healthy Cents curriculum to help participants learn how growing produce at home can lead to money savings and healthier food choices. During the five weekly lessons, participants received seeds, soil, and grow bags to plant summer vegetables, as well as information on food budgeting, grocery shopping tips, meal planning, and easy recipes using vegetables. All participants reported increased knowledge and interest in growing more fruits and vegetables at home, as well as increased knowledge of ways to reduce food waste and save money on produce.



Thriving youth are the core of healthy, robust communities. Illinois Extension's mentorship-based youth development model focuses on social competence, academic success, career development, and community connection. The 4-H experience creates opportunities and environments for all youth to thrive now and in the future.

## Local 4-H members earn state scholarships

Haven Henry and Sophia Schneider, both of Logan County, were selected as Illinois 4-H scholarship winners in the Creative and Performing Arts and Communications category. Only five 4-H members statewide are chosen in each category, based on merit and a demonstrated standard of 4-H excellence.



Haven Henry



Sophia Schneider



4-H Club Members

Adult 4-H Volunteers



**38** 4-H Clubs

505



1,073 4-H Show Exhibits



**4,104** Youth Who Received 4-H Experiences (e.g. in-school programs)

In 4-H, I have learned how to be a successful leader, how to make the most of my youth, and how to give back to others. I am incredibly thankful for the knowledge 4-H has given me. 4-H member Sophia Schneider



Learn more about local 4-H activities extension.illinois.edu/LMS/4-H-youth-development

## Outreach programs introduce new youth to "learning by doing"

While 4-H is best known for the experience of joining a club and exhibiting projects, local 4-H staff also reach youth throughout our communities through fun and engaging educational programs in schools and through special outreach programs. Summer 2023 exemplified the variety of experiences available to local 5 to 18-year-olds through 4-H. A series of day camps attracted new families and introduced the 4-H philosophy of "learning by doing" to 88 youth who were new to 4-H.

- Cloverbuds 2 camps. Cloverbuds is an exciting 4-H program to help kids ages 5 to 7 grow as competent, caring, and contributing members of their families and communities through fun, hands-on programming. The summer day camps included activities in art, STEM, nature, and kitchen science.
- 4-H Cooking 101 5 camps. Youth learned about nutrition, food preparation skills, and food safety by preparing simple recipes. The future chefs made healthy snacks and simple meals, including waffles, fruit smoothies, veggie pizzas, and banana chocolate chip quesadillas.
- Wizarding World 1 camp. After being sorted into their "house" groups, campers made their own wands, raced on broomsticks, and conducted magical science experiments. They cultivated teamwork and belonging while practicing their problem-solving skills.
- **Crime and Spy** 1 camp. The young detectives-intraining explored the science behind investigating crime scenes and identifying evidence, learned about solubility and physical changes of state, made predictions, and conducted experiments to find their own answers. Working as an investigative team, they built unity through shared failures and successes.
- **Cheer Camp** 1 camp. Campers built up their confidence, work ethic, and social awareness while learning new cheers, dance choreography, and teamwork, culminating in a performance during the Logan County Fair.



Logan County 4-H members Charlotte Judd and Cameron Wilmert won first place in the Oral Interpretation Team category at the 2023 Illinois 4-H Public Speaking Contest.

Summer programs are a chance for us to create new, exciting, and innovative experiences that meet the diverse needs and interests of our ever-changing communities. 4-H Educator Carissa Davis



An attendee at the Wizarding World day camp dissects an owl pellet to discover what types of creatures that owl had eaten.

## Local 4-H supporters receive honors

Jerry Hicks of Sangamon County was selected as the 2023 Outstanding Lifetime Volunteer for Illinois and was also honored as the top Outstanding Lifetime Volunteer for the entire North Central Region. For over 40 years, Jerry has volunteered on the local, regional, and state levels. He credits 4-H for putting him on a lifelong path to career success, and he wants every child in Illinois to have that same opportunity.

Amy Hyde of Logan County and David Mendenhall of Sangamon County were recognized as new inductees into the Illinois 4-H Hall of Fame. Amy and David both have long track records of exemplary service to 4-H and outstanding career and community achievements.





Amy Hyde



# Home and community landscapes

There is growing evidence that time spent around plants and in green spaces has many benefits, including improved health, better interpersonal relationships, and a higher quality of life. Sustainable home landscapes also increase property values and build stronger ecosystems for plants and wildlife.

## Master Gardeners enhance their knowledge so they can share with others

Master Gardener volunteers in Logan, Menard, and Sangamon counties are busy throughout the year enhancing their own knowledge on a variety of gardening topics and then sharing their knowledge and skills with the community. Volunteers talked with over 1,300 visitors at the Illinois State Fair and shared gardening advice with shoppers at the Illinois Products Farmers' Market in Springfield and the Lincoln Memorial Hospital Market in Lincoln. Below are more highlights of learning and sharing in 2023.

#### "Growing Great Vegetables" Webinar

Nearly 300 attendees learned the basics of growing a vegetable garden from start to finish during this five-part webinar series. Local Horticulture Educator Jennifer Fishburn was one of five Illinois Extension gardening expert presenters.

#### **Russel Allen Garden Day**

During the annual Russel Allen Garden Day held at Oasis Senior Center in Lincoln, 60 participants learned about "Attracting Pollinators to Your Garden" from Illinois Extension Horticulture Educator Ken Johnson.

#### A Walk in the Garden

During a walk in the Small Fruits Garden outside the Sangamon Extension Office, Master Gardener volunteers shared information about irrigation, tomatoes, strawberries, square foot gardening, zinnias, gooseberries, and rhubarb. Master Gardener volunteers also led a walk in the Demonstration Gardens at the Illinois State Fairgrounds, where attendees learned about container gardening with annuals, tips for growing culinary herbs, and composting.



Master Gardener volunteers learn and share during "A Walk in the Garden" outside the Sangamon Extension Office.



Learn more about local Horticulture activities extension.illinois.edu/LMS/horticulture



110Master Gardener Volunteers

29 Master Naturalist Volunteers

213 **Expert Consultations with Master Gardeners** 



300 Pounds of Produce Donated

**Extension-Supported Gardens** 

142 **Educational Sessions** 

#### Introduction to Beekeeping Classes

Through this series of six classes, fourteen participants joined in person or virtually to explore the fascinating world of honeybees and the steps to becoming a beekeeper. These classes were offered in partnership with Prairie State Beekeepers and the Sangamon County Farm Bureau.

#### Children's Garden at Henson Robinson Zoo

Visitors at Henson Robinson Zoo in Springfield can learn about the process through which worms produce rich organic soil at the vermicomposting bin in the Children's Garden. Master Gardener volunteers also led fun and educational activities during the Zoo's "Butterfly Bliss" event.

#### Dean Home Heirloom Vegetable Garden

Master Gardener volunteers shared educational information with visitors at the Dean Home Garden, located at the Lincoln Home National Historic Site. Volunteers visited with more than 800 visitors from across the United States and around the world. In addition, more than 300 pounds of produce were donated to a local food pantry.

#### Plant Sales

Master Gardener volunteers provided quality products to local home gardeners through their annual plant sales. Sangamon and Menard Master Gardeners held their annual Herb and Pollinator Plant Sale, providing a variety of herbs and pollinator-friendly plants, including basil, parsley, thyme, lavender, sage, lemon grass, fennel, dill, oregano, lantana, pentas, and salvia. Logan Master Gardeners also held their annual plant sale, providing houseplants, vegetables, annuals, and more than 45 types of prairie plants.



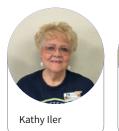
Master Gardener volunteers share take-home basil plants with kids at the Lincoln Memorial Hospital Market.

## Local volunteers honored for outstanding service

Two local Master Gardeners were honored at the state level for their outstanding contributions in 2023. Jim Struebing of New Holland received the State Outstanding Master Gardener Award, which is given to an individual who demonstrates leadership and has volunteered more than 180 hours. Ken Hage of Chatham received the State Sustained Excellence Master Gardener Award. Volunteers earning this award must have previously received the State Outstanding Master Gardener Award and volunteered an additional 300 hours for the program while exhibiting leadership.



Sangamon County Master Gardeners Kathy Iler, Jennifer Justin, and Barbara Thompson were given the 2023 Dick Lewis Memorial Award. This local award is given to Master Gardeners with three or more years of outstanding service to the program.







Jennifer Justin

Barbara Thompson

# Food access

Research shows a strong link between food insecurity, poor physical and mental health, and even poor academic outcomes for children. Food insecurity is not just about hunger. It also indicates a decrease in access to culturally relevant and nutritionally robust food. Food insecurity affects every community in Illinois. Illinois Extension connects youth, volunteers, and partners, working together to address the needs of communities most impacted by food insecurity through research, community service, and advocacy.

# Extension helps medical students facing food insecurity

Over half of the students attending SIU School of Medicine are also facing food insecurity, as discovered through a food insecurity screening conducted through a partnership between the medical school and local Extension staff. The screening revealed that the high demands of a medical residency program do not allow time for students to have a job, and they could not afford enough food to feed themselves and their families. To combat this problem, the school opened a food pantry for students, providing canned foods and toiletries. In the fall, a refrigerator and freezer were added to the pantry, giving students access to dairy and meat products, with plans to make produce available. Extension is helping to make the food pantry more sustainable by securing food from local grocery stores and donations from businesses.



Learn more about local Nutrition Education activities extension.illinois.edu/LMS/nutrition-education



15 Partnerships with K-12 Schools and Early Childhood Centers

14 Partnerships with Emergency Food Sites and Other Organizations



454 Nutrition Education Classes



19

Policy, Systems, and/or Environmental Changes Adopted by Partner Organizations



Extension staff assist the Central Illinois Foodbank during mobile food distributions and other community events by providing recipe demonstrations and healthy eating materials.

Dear, Friend of 4-H. Thank you for the Water bottle and loward. I am glad Water bottle and loward. I am glad You liked My exhibit. This is my first Year of doing 4-H. So am happy that I did So Well. Thank you I I did So Well. Thank you I

From Travis

## FY2023 Financial Report

REVENUES		
<ul> <li>County Board</li> <li>Federal</li> <li>State</li> <li>Local/Program Fees TOTAL</li> </ul>	\$312,276 \$339,948 \$261,152 \$23,937 <b>\$937,313</b>	33% 36% 28% 3%

A Friend of 4-H 700 S. Airport Drive Springfield, IL 62707

## **EXPENDITURES**

Personnel	\$573,333	61%
Rent/Utilities	\$155,174	17%
Program Materials	\$58,821	6%
Travel	\$57,700	6%
Other/Miscellaneous	\$87,755	9%
TOTAL	\$932,783	

Council members generously sacrifice their time to help Extension remain vibrant, relevant, and in touch with the needs of the communities we serve. Their dedication is very appreciated. County Director Terri Casey

## **Extension Council**

thank you

The Extension Council is authorized by the University of Illinois Board of Trustees, in accordance with state law, to be actively involved in the operation of University of Illinois Extension Extension Councils cooperate with Extension staff in planning, promoting, developing, implementing, evaluating, and financing an Extension program designed to meet the needs, interests, and resources of local communities served.

A friend of Win 7003. Airpo

THANK

Friend of H-h, Thank You for your donation to my Interior Design Project I'm so grateful for you!

O Jenner

#### **Council Members**

Zach Dixon	Menard County
Kindall Helton	Logan County
Clay Irwin	Logan County
Charlotte Judd	Logan County
William Kennett	Logan County
Samantha O'Neill	Menard County
Elise Ransdell	Sangamon County
Sophia Schneider	Logan County
Vera Small	Sangamon County
Emma Wankel	Menard County
Jadyn Wheat	Sangamon County

#### **County Board Appointees**

Keenan Leesman	Logan County
David Mendenhall	Sangamon County
Brad Miller	Sangamon County
Ed Whitcomb, Jr.	Menard County



Find local Extension Council information extension.illinois.edu/LMS/extension-council

#### STAFF

Sherri Bishop 4-H Youth Development Program Coordinator

Melissa Bland **Office Support Assistant** 

Kayla Breedwell Extra Help, Ag in the Classroom

Terri Casey **County Director** 

Carissa Davis 4-H Youth Development Educator

Jennifer Fishburn Horticulture Educator Rachel Fishburn Extra Help, 4-H

Joey Fonseca-Islas Region 2 SNAP-Ed Specialist

**Rachel Frost** Extra Help, Ag in the Classroom

Amanda Gray Extra Help, Clerical

Amy Hallmark SNAP-Ed Community Worker

Barbara Hedden Extra Help, Clerical Pam Schallhorn Region 2 Community & Economic Development Specialist

Shirley Schwing Office Support Associate

Stacie Skelton 4-H Youth Development **Program Coordinator** 

Shawna Stake-Charron **Office Support Assistant** 

**Debbie Stephenson** Extra Help, Horticulture Kayla Swaar SNAP-Ed Educator

Sarah Swaar **SNAP-Ed Community Worker** 

**Travis Wiggins** SNAP-Ed Community Worker

Jane Willman Extra Help, Horticulture

Amy Zepp 4-H Youth Development Program Coordinator

#### **OFFICE INFORMATION**

#### **Logan County Extension**

980 N. Postville Dr. Lincoln. IL 62656 (217) 732-8289 Mon - Fri, 8 am - 4:30 pm closed noon - 1 pm

#### **Menard County Extension** 420 S. 7th St.

Petersburg, IL 62675 (217) 632-7491 Mon & Wed, 8 am - 4:30 pm closed noon - 1 pm

#### **Sangamon County Extension**

700 S. Airport Dr. Springfield, IL 62707 (217) 782-4617 Mon - Fri, 8 am - 4:30 pm closed noon - 1 pm

#### ONLINE



facebook.com/ExtensionLMS



facebook.com/LMS.4H



facebook.com/UIExtension.MasterGardener.MasterNaturalist





#### If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate, please contact the event coordinator. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time to meet your needs.

#### College of Agricultural, Consumer & Environmental Sciences

University of Illinois, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Local Extension Councils Cooperating. University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

The Illinois Nutrition Education Programs are funded by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP).

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